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Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Letter dated 19 June 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

I have the honour to address you in your capacity as Chairman of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country in order to convey to you my deepest concern over the fact that the authorities of the host country, in an arbitrary and unjustifiable manner, have denied the request made by Mrs. Ismara Vargas Walter, Third Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations, to travel beyond the 25-mile radius from Columbus Circle in the district of United Nations Headquarters, in order to participate in the informal meeting of the Working Group on the Crime of Aggression, chaired by the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations and open to the participation of all Member States of the United Nations, held from 8 to 11 June 2006 at Princeton University.

We once more regret that the authorities of the host country continue to deny, on certain occasions, requests for travel permission to Cuban diplomats to attend forums and meetings related to the United Nations, or organized by missions accredited to the Organization, on items that are debated on its agenda that are held outside of the 25-mile radius area, a limit which is imposed on the general rule of free movement of United Nations diplomats.

This practice places the officials of the Cuban Mission in a disadvantageous position in the negotiation, reflection and document adoption processes.

The policy of applying restrictions on the movement of Cuban diplomats and international officials with Cuban citizenship accredited to the United Nations or who work for the Organization is unjust, selective, discriminatory and politically motivated, in contravention of the obligations of the host country contained in the Headquarters agreement as well as the provisions of the international legal instruments on diplomatic privileges and immunities to which the United States of America is a State Party. Likewise, they are contrary to the letter and sprit of the Vienna Convention on the Representation of States in their Relations with International Organizations of a Universal Character of 14 March 1975.

Added to the aforementioned event is the fact that the visa to the Cuban representative who would travel from Havana to participate in the said meeting was granted belatedly, only on the afternoon of 9 June 2006, which prevented him from attending it.

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We once again urge the host country to reconsider its position on the issues we have pointed out, according to the general principles of international law of equality and non-discrimination.

I have further the honour to request the inclusion in the agenda of the next meeting of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country an item related to the circulation restrictions imposed by the host country on certain Permanent Missions accredited to the United Nations, including the Permanent Mission of Cuba.

I would very much appreciate it if you had the kindness to distribute the present letter as a document of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

(*Signed*) Rodrigo **Malmierca Díaz**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative